

NORTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
(North Intermediate School)
1500 Patterson Avenue
Winston-Salem
Forsyth County
North Carolina

HABS No. NC-388

HABS
NC-388

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Southeast Region
Department of the Interior
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE NORTH CAROLINA		COUNTY FORSYTH	TOWN OR VICINITY WINSTON-SALEM
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) NORTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (Administrative records, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools)			HABS NO. NC-388
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE North Intermediate School; Optional Education Center (Administrative records, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools)			
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) 1500 Patterson Avenue			
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1922-1923 (original plans; "Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools Site and Building Data")		ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) Willard C. Northup (original plans and specifications)	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) See continuation sheet.			
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Tudor Revival			
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) See continuation sheet.			
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) -shaped structure, with overall measurements approximately 305' x 105' (see photocopied floor plans)			
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE See continuation sheet.			
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) See continuation sheet and photocopied floor plans.			
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES See continuation sheet.			
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Fair; vacant.			
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE According to Gladys Lawrence Stuart, a student at North Elementary during the 1920s, the school at that time had an outdoor swimming pool just south of the gym.			
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) See continuation sheet.			
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Laura A. W. Phillips, Consultant			DATE March 15, 1988.

NORTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
(North Intermediate School)
HABS No. NC-388 (page 2)

Significance:

North Elementary School is representative of the group of handsome brick schools erected during the 1920s as part of a building boom in Forsyth County's school architecture. Most of these schools were designed by the prominent Winston-Salem architectural firm of Northrup and O'Brien. All were finished on the interior with plastered walls and narrow, beaded wainscot and all were equipped with spacious, light-filled classrooms and an auditorium. Most displayed Neo-Classical and Colonial Revival motifs, but North Elementary reflected the Tudor Revival style.

Willard C. Northrup (1882-1942) was an architect of statewide prominence who established his office in Winston-Salem soon after graduating from the University of Pennsylvania in 1906. He was a charter member of the North Carolina Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and served at various times as Secretary-Treasurer, Vice President, and President. He helped establish architectural licensing in North Carolina, and when a licensing act was passed in 1915, he was among the first to be formally licensed. His numerous projects--either alone or with his partner, Leet O'Brien--included over 100 schools in North Carolina, the State Office and Department of Justice buildings in Raleigh, and the Salem Town Hall, the Winston-Salem City Hall, Forsyth County Courthouse, Baptist Hospital, City Market, Twin City Sentinel Building, and O'Hanlon Building in Winston-Salem.

North Elementary School was erected in 1922-1923 and served as an elementary school until 1971. Initially, and during most of its history, it was a school for white children. In response to the change in racial make-up of the surrounding area, however, North Elementary was converted to a school for black children ca. 1965. In 1971, with court-ordered integration, the schools in Winston-Salem converted to a K-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12 system, and North Elementary became North Intermediate School serving grades 5-6. In 1978 the school became the Optional Education Center, an alternative form of school for some students in grades 7-12. It remained the Optional Education Center until June, 1984. The school has stood vacant since then.

Material of Construction:

The exterior is hard-fired Flemish bond brick with terra cotta trim. The interior materials include plastered walls, wood wainscot and trim, and hardwood floors. Although the exact structural system is unknown, the architect's specifications indicate the use of structural steel along with wood and masonry.

NORTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
(North Intermediate School)
HABS No. NC-388 (page 3)

Exterior Features of Note:

The exterior of the handsome three-story brick building features Flemish bond brickwork and contrasting terra cotta trim in a simple but well-articulated reflection of the Tudor Revival style. Banks of large sash windows suggest the interior arrangement of the classrooms. Both the main entrance bay near the north end of the facade and the auditorium entrance bay at the south end are emphasized by a stepped parapet cornice and a surrounding quoined border. The entrances themselves utilize broad Tudor-arched surrounds. The auditorium entrance bay is further distinguished by its elevated and slightly projecting position at second story height and by the flight of steps leading to it. Terra cotta string courses encircle all but the rear of the building just above the first floor and at cornice height. The south end of the school features a row of four over-sized windows reflecting the auditorium-gymnasium within, while the north end terminates in the one-story, 1952 brick-veneered addition. The rear (west elevation) of the school features rhythmic bands of windows but is devoid of ornamentation. Attached by a covered walkway to the rear of the main building is the one-story, brick-veneered annex built in 1967-1968.

Interior Features of Note:

The interior is treated with hardwood floors, plastered walls and ceilings, beaded board wainscot, and picture molding. Doors are typical of the Craftsman style popular during the 1920s with three vertical panels in the lower half and six lights in the upper half. The classrooms are arranged along the long north-south arm of the L-shaped school with simple stairs featuring ironwork newels and balustrades and wooden handrails at the northwest and southeast corners of the wing. The classrooms themselves are spacious and well-lighted with a bank of five large six-over-six sash windows. Classrooms are equipped with blackboards, bulletin boards flanked by built-in glass-and-wood cabinets, and cloak rooms. On the first and second floors, the classrooms on the east side of the building have large transoms along the inner (west) wall to provide additional lighting to the central hall. On the third floor original hall skylights replace the wall transoms in providing extra light to the hall. At the south end of the school, the east-west arm of the building contains on the first floor the boys' and girls' shower and locker rooms as well as the boiler and related mechanical rooms. The second and third floors are consumed with the auditorium-gymnasium (sometimes called the "gymtorium"), the east end lobby, and the balcony (now enclosed) above the lobby. The auditorium is simply but handsomely detailed with a high beaded board wainscot, over-sized windows, a plaster coved cornice, and a stage at the west end with a molded, curved surround. The front lobby is the most decorative space in the school, with a paneled wainscot, three sets of double-leaf doors with Tudor-arched surrounds (in addition to the main entrance with its pair of double-leaf doors and all-encompassing Tudor arch with transom), and a southeast corner stair to the balcony with decorative ironwork newel and balustrade.

NORTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
(North Intermediate School)
HABS No. NC-388 (page 4)

Major Alterations and Additions:

- 1952 - A one-story, flat-roofed, brick-veneered addition containing three classrooms and a library was added to the north end of the building. (See photocopied floor plans.) It was designed by architect Gorell Stinson.
- 1967-1968 - A separate annex building, designed by the architectural firm of Stinson-Hines, was erected behind the original structure. It is a one-story, L-shaped, brick-veneered building with a flat roof which housed six classrooms (originally kindergartens) and a cafeteria. (See photocopied site plan.)

Sources of Information:

- Administrative records. Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools.
- Architect's (Willard C. Northup) specifications for North Elementary School. Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools.
- Interview with Gladys Lawrence Stuart (student at North Elementary School 1926-1929), March 4, 1988.
- Interview with Jim Wheeler (principal of Optional Education Center), March 4, 1988.
- Interview with Hoyt A. Wiseman (principal of North Elementary School, 1967-1971), March 4, 1988.
- Original building plans for North Elementary School. Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools.
- Phillips, Laura A. W. "Salem Town Hall." National Register Nomination. North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1982.
- Taylor, Gwynne Stephens. From Frontier to Factory: An Architectural History of Forsyth County. Winston-Salem: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History with Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Historic Properties Commission and City-County Planning Board of Forsyth County and Winston-Salem, 1981.
- "Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools Site and Building Data." Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools.

HABS No. NC-388 (page 6)

